

by Bob Saydowski, Jr.

## Aquarian Hi - Energy Miking System

Aquarian Accessories Corp. has stepped into another area of percussion, this time with a low-impedance miking system for drums. The *Hi-Energy Miking System* utilizes omni-directional electret condenser mic's. These mic's are very small—only three inches long—and weigh only four ounces each. Unlike dynamic mic's, the Aquarian condensers do not add sound coloration and do not need padding or limiting. They give an essentially flat frequency response, except for a bit of increase in the high end. In using the system, drum tuning is a critical factor, since the mic's give the natural drum sound. With the absence of coloration, the mic's can make a badly tuned drum sound even worse when amplified.

The key to Aquarian's system lies in

their *Dynamic Range Extender*. Available in six-, three-, or one-channel design, the *Range Extender* increases the sound pressure level for each mic' without distorting. The unit incorporates the power supply (with LED power monitors), but it has no volume or tone controls. It is merely a junction for all the microphones. Each channel has one male cannon plug and one female cannon jack. Cables are supplied to go from mic' to *Range Extender*. Separate leads are needed to go from the *Range Extender* to the P.A. board or sub-mixer. Aquarian stresses the point that the *Dynamic Range Extender* will *not* work with other microphones, and, in fact, may cause damage to mic's other than theirs.

To give a clean stage appearance, the mic's clamp very securely onto the drum hoops or cymbal stands in a C-clamp style. The mic's themselves are permanently attached to the holders (which, by the way, are shockproof). Different clamps are available for a variety of uses. Mounting can be done on a drum rim, bass drum hoop (the holder has a four-inch extension), or cymbal stand (which mikes from underneath). For hi-hats, a special bracket clamps onto the height tube and extends past the cymbals to mike from the cymbal edge. A dual miking bracket is available for miking two drums with one mic'. This holder utilizes a nine-inch thin aluminum rod attached to a clamp. The mic' is movable across the rod for positioning between the two drums. Besides mounting on a drumkit, the mic's will also work on congas, timbales, bongos, etc.

The Aquarian mic's have a better application in live sound reinforcement than in studio miking, since, of course, recording is so much more demanding. The bass drum mic' gives a minimum of "boom"

which is regularly associated with dynamic mic's, and it can be placed anywhere on either the front or batter hoop. The rest of the drumkit, when miked, sounds the same out in the audience as it does when you're behind the kit—a true, unadulterated sound. Given their omni-directional characteristic, there is leakage between mic's. I didn't even have to use cymbal mic's, because the other drum mic's picked up large portions of the cymbal sounds. (Besides, for my own reasons, I would never close mike cymbals. They need their air space.) The mic's do not get in the way of playing at all, and the entire system is very compact and easy to set up; I managed to fit the entire six-channel system, plus cables, into a fiber bongo case!

The *Hi-Energy Miking System* is available in six-channel format for \$1,200; three-channel format for \$683; and one-channel for \$210. (Separate leatherette bags are supplied with all mic's.) If you're in need of a compact miking system for clubs, concerts, etc., the Aquarian delivers true reproduction with a realistic price tag.

